



Department of Justice

United States Attorney Richard S. Hartunian
Northern District of New York

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: Craig Benedict or John
Duncan

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www.justice.gov/usao/nyn

PHONE: (315) 448-0672

MAN PLEADS GUILTY TO PILOTING COMMERCIAL SHIPS ON GREAT LAKES WITH FRAUDULENT COAST GUARD LICENSE

SYRACUSE, NEW YORK - Richard S. Hartunian, United States Attorney for the Northern District of New York, announced today that Mark Anselm, 37, of Clayton, N.Y., pled guilty before the U.S. District Judge Glen T. Suddaby to six felony offenses that charged him with making false statements to officials of the United States Coast Guard, possession and use of an altered merchant marine license, and aggravated identity theft.

In pleading guilty, Anselm admitted that during 2011 and 2012 he held himself out to federal officials, to various marina owners, and to other potential employers as being a licensed commercial ship pilot when he possessed no such license. Anselm admitted to having repeatedly presented fraudulent merchant marine licenses to employers and potential employers that he had altered to substitute his name. With his false licenses, he gained employment and operated various commercial ships on Lake Ontario. His criminal conduct was discovered by the Coast Guard after he grounded a tug boat in Canadian waters on June 19, 2012. The ensuing investigation revealed numerous instances of Anselm holding himself out as a licensed commercial merchant marine captain based upon licenses that he had forged.

Anselm is scheduled to be sentenced on March 28, 2014, in Syracuse, NY. He faces a maximum term of incarceration of 27 years, and a fine of up to \$1.5 million. The sentence

imposed for aggravated identity theft contains a mandatory minimum 2 year term of incarceration and must run consecutively to the sentence imposed on any other count.

This case was investigated by Special Agents of the Coast Guard and Department of Homeland Security. Prosecution is being handled by Assistant United States Attorney Craig A. Benedict. Mr. Benedict may be contacted for questions regarding this case at 315-448-0726.

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